

K-175

Massey Mill, Gilpin's Mill, Higman Mill

1760

Old Grist Mill, Millington Mill

Millington

Private

Gilpin's Mill was built in 1760 by Daniel Massey and remained in use for 200 years. The brick walls of the structure rise three and one-half stories from the banks of the Chester River. The power for grinding was supplied by a wrought iron overshot wheel which was turned by water from the mill pond behind the structure. This is the third type of wheel used: the first, a wooden overshot type was replaced by a turbine or sidewheel. Milling machinery and stone mill wheels remain in place.

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST

K-175

1934-1935 +

INVENTORY FORM FOR STATE HISTORIC SITES SURVEY

1 NAME

HISTORIC

Massey Mill, Gilpin's Mill, Higman Mill

AND/OR COMMON

Old Grist Mill, Millington Mill

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

South of traffic light, on the Chester River

CITY, TOWN

Millington

— VICINITY OF

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

First

STATE

Maryland

COUNTY

Kent

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE <input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL <input type="checkbox"/> PARK
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL <input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	PUBLIC ACQUISITION	ACCESSIBLE	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT <input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT <input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL <input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OTHER Barn

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

Lee Bramble (Mr. & Mrs.)

Telephone #:(301) 928-3341

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

Millington

— VICINITY OF

STATE, zip code

Maryland 21651

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,

REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC. Kent County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

Liber #: EAP 48

Folio #: 628

CITY, TOWN

Chestertown

STATE

Maryland 21620

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

DATE

☐ FEDERAL ☐ STATE ☐ COUNTY ☐ LOCALDEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

7 DESCRIPTION

K-175

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED DATE _____
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

One of the earliest structures remaining in the town of Millington is the old grist mill which stands on the north bank of the Chester River. Constructed in the 1760's, by Daniel Massey, the mill was operated until the 1960's.

At the time the building was constructed the town was appropriately called "Head of Chester" for here, nearly 37 miles from the Bay, the river is little more than a tidal stream.

The old brick building is two and one-half stories high; the river bank drops off on the south gable making this elevation a full story taller. The building is covered with a steep gable roof with ridge running north and south. Brick walls are laid in one four English bond, now painted barn red.

Two entrances into the brick building remain; one on the center of the west wall facing the street has a batten Dutch door set in a heavy, pegged wooden frame. The only other opening in this facade is a small window above the door. A second entrance is centered in the north gable; this wide door which once lead outside now serves to connect the mill with a later addition.

Windows are placed irregularly throughout perhaps to respond to demands of the milling operations. In general they are small square openings, with an occasional 6/6 window, including two in the full story basement on the south facade. One other 6/6 window in this facade on the first floor may have been a door, although it is now several feet above ground level.

The wrought iron overshot mill wheel is located on the east side of the mill. Two 6/6 windows provide a view over the wheel and mill race. The second floor has a small central window and the attic is lit by a large shed dormer facing east.

A two story hip roofed addition was constructed on the north wall during the late 19th or early 20th century. It has board and batten exterior sheathing and standing seam tin roof. It now contains the main entrance to the mill, a large, double batten door. The door opening has clipped corners, reflecting the building's corner braced post and beam structural system. Windows with 6/6 sash flank the door and a single window is centered above the door.

The dimly lit interior has one room on each of the four floors. This is an example of an early form of industrial building with few comforts and no decorative detailing. There is no evidence of a fireplace in the old mill, only a stove in the later addition.

Floors of the brick mill are framed with large poplar logs stripped of their bark but left round. Floors are of thick pine planks. The newer frame addition has evenly sawn fir structural members and pine partitions. Ladder stairs near the north entrance provide access from floor to floor in the brick portion.

One of the most interesting aspects of the mill is the old milling machinery, including mill stones, which remain inside. Machinery bears the name "Salem."

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

8 SIGNIFICANCE

K-175

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES 1760

BUILDER/ARCHITECT Daniel Massey

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The old mill attributes its significance to its architecture and to its long history as the home of one of the town's leading commercial enterprises.

Architecturally simple, it is a fine example of the effects of industry on building form. Problems of the need for delivery and processing of large amounts of grain, storage, and most significantly, access to power are solved here in a prototypical and efficient way. That the building served its original function for almost 200 years, adapting to changing technology, is a credit to its designer and builder. Excerpts from, "The Molinography of Kent County" by John McGrain, record the history of this fascinating structure.

"The Old Higman Grist Mill is located at the head of Chester River on Md. 313 next to the bridge. It was built in 1760 by Daniel Massey and sold to Thomas Gilpin soon after. It stood on a tract of land originally granted to Josiah Massey. This is the last of six mills which once stood within 3 miles of "Head of Chester." (The name of Millington in the late 18th century) Three story brick building has beams in the first floor ceiling shows a long gash down the side, said to have been caused when the second floor was overloaded with grain when the building was being used as a granary, reputedly, to stockpile during the War of 1812. A large iron strap along the pond side of the mill restrains a wall bulged by overloading. Lettering scratched on the highway side shows highwater mark of 1804 when Chester River rose to within a few inches of first floor, 14 feet above normal level. The mill run and a small stream nearby feeding into it make up the Chester River at the point. The mill run, or race, originally wound 3/4 of a mile around the town to the large ponds near the community baseball diamond and was in some places the town boundary line. There was a traveler's tradition of throwing coins and small objects into the mill race on the way to Massey, (the next town north of Millington). The first wheel was the wooden overshot type, later replaced by turbine or sidewheel. A metal wheel (still in place although rusted) was installed 1923. A steam engine was used for auxiliary power in times of low water.

The mill burned in 1872 and was rebuilt. It is shown as J. Wesley Jarman's Millington Merchant Mills in the atlas of 1877. In 1905 (or 1904) it was deeded to James E. Higman and operated

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

McGrain, John, "The M~~o~~linography of Kent County," 1st draft, 9/1967.
Baltimore County Historical Society, March, 1971.

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY _____

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE

COUNTY

STATE

COUNTY

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Marsha L. Fritz, Consultant

ORGANIZATION

Kent County Historical Society

DATE

August, 1977

STREET & NUMBER

Church Alley

TELEPHONE

CITY OR TOWN

Chestertown

STATE

Maryland 21620

The Maryland Historic Sites Inventory was officially created by an Act of the Maryland Legislature, to be found in the Annotated Code of Maryland, Article 41, Section 181 KA, 1974 Supplement.

The Survey and Inventory are being prepared for information and record purposes only and do not constitute any infringement of individual property rights.

RETURN TO: Maryland Historical Trust
The Shaw House, 21 State Circle
Annapolis, Maryland 21401
(301) 267-1438

7 Continued

The wrought iron mill wheel is about 6 feet wide. It is located on the east side and was installed in 1923 to replace an earlier wheel in the same location.

The structure, now deteriorating and showing signs of termite and water damage, is vacant. A valuable document of the life and architecture of a town and a region, it is certainly worthy of careful preservation.

8 Continued

by John and Harry Higman until sold in 1946 to Mr. and Mrs. Karl Bauer, owners of Mill House next door, at that time.

Although milling supposedly declined in Millington after 1872 fire according to the WPA Guide, p. 413, the building was in use as a mill until the 1960's. Two brothers, Robert and Dorn O'Dell were grinding flour in 1950 and were the subject of an article, "186-Year-Old Mill Keeps Grinding on in Maryland," in the New York Herald Tribune, of February 26. The mill race was filled in, 1962, in building new bridge. Mr. and Mrs. Gary H. Mooney purchased the building June 1966; Mooney was a cartoonist from California and had a studio in the mill. The pond was occupied by swan.

EXCERPT FROM "THE MOLINOGRAPHY OF KENT CO." (1ST DRAFT) by K-17
JOHN MCGRAW, BALTIMORE COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY, MARCH 1971.

MILLINGTON MILLS (1) ■ ■

1. A feed mill for the poultry industry, Millington Mills, is in 1967 phone book.
2. An alfalfa drying mill is pictured in Living in Kent County, Md., State Department of Education publication, 1954.
3. The OLD HIGMAN GRIST MILL, located at the head of Chester River on Md. 313 next to the bridge. It was built in 1760 by Daniel Massey and sold to Thomas Gilpin. It stood on a tract of land originally granted to Josiah Massey. This is the last of six mills which once stood within 3 miles of Head of Chester town. Three-story brick building with beams hewed roughly from tree trunks. Fitted with wooden pegs. One of the beams in the first-floor ceiling shows a long gash down the side, said to have been caused when the second floor was overloaded with grain when the building was being used as a granary during the war of 1812 to stockpile food. A large iron strap along the pond side of the mill restrains a wall bulged by overloading. Lettering scratched on the highway side shows highwater mark of 1804 when Chester River rose to within a few inches of first floor, 14 feet above normal level. The mill run and a small stream nearby feeding into it make up the Chester River at the point. The mill run, or race, originally wound 3/4 of a mile around the town to the large ponds near the community baseball diamond and was in some places the town boundary line. There was a travelers' tradition of throwing coins and small objects into the mill race on the way to Massey. The first wheel was the wooden overshot type, later replaced by turbine or sidewheel. A metal wheel was installed 1923. Never stopped by ice or cold. A steam engine was used for auxiliary power in times of low water. The mill burned in 1872 and was rebuilt. Shown as J. Wesley Jarman's Millington Merchant Mills in atlas. In 1905 (or 1904) it was deeded to James E. Higman and operated by John and Harry Higman until sold in

MILLINGTON (Continued)

1946 to Mr. and Mrs. Karl Bauer, owners of Mill House. Higman had been miller for Biscoe Mill in Queen Anne County. Milling supposedly declined in Millington after 1872 fire, WPA Guide, p. 413. "Robert O'Dell, an ex-GI is the current owner," He and brother, Dorn O'Dell were grinding flour, "186-Year-Old Mill Keeps Grinding on in Maryland," New York Herald Tribune, February 26, 1950. Mill race was filled in, 1962, in building new bridge. Mr. and Mrs. Gary H. Mooney purchased mill in June 1966; Mooney is a cartoonist from California and has a studio in mill. Pond with swans. "The Old Mill," by F.C. Martin, The Kent Shoreman, Earlesville, October 1967. Line drawing in Historic Landmarks of Delaware and the Eastern Shore, Betty Harrington Macdonald, p. 88, published by Delaware State Society of Daughters of American Colonists, 1963.

4. The 1795 map shows Justices Mill at Bridgetown, the present Millington.
5. The J.H. Pennington Mill is shown upriver east of Millington in atlas.
6. The 1887 directory lists Millington millers as J. Wesley Jarman and J.E. Briscoe (sic)
7. Article entitled, "Only One Still Grinds of Six Which Stood 100 Years Ago," by Douglas Adams, Sun, July 7, 1935. This attributes building to Daniell Massey in 1760, rather than Thomas Gilpin in 1704, as in Kent Shoreman.

MILLINGTON MERCHANT MILLS (1)

Prop., J. Wesley Jarman, finest brands of flour. On millrace on Queen Anne and Kent County Railroad near Chester River, atlas. Same as Higman-Millington Mill, q.v.

MILLINGTON MILLPOND (1)

"Big Millpond" on Cypress Branch near Millington, per Water Resources map,

John McGrain

Baltimore Co. Hist. Soc.

March 1971

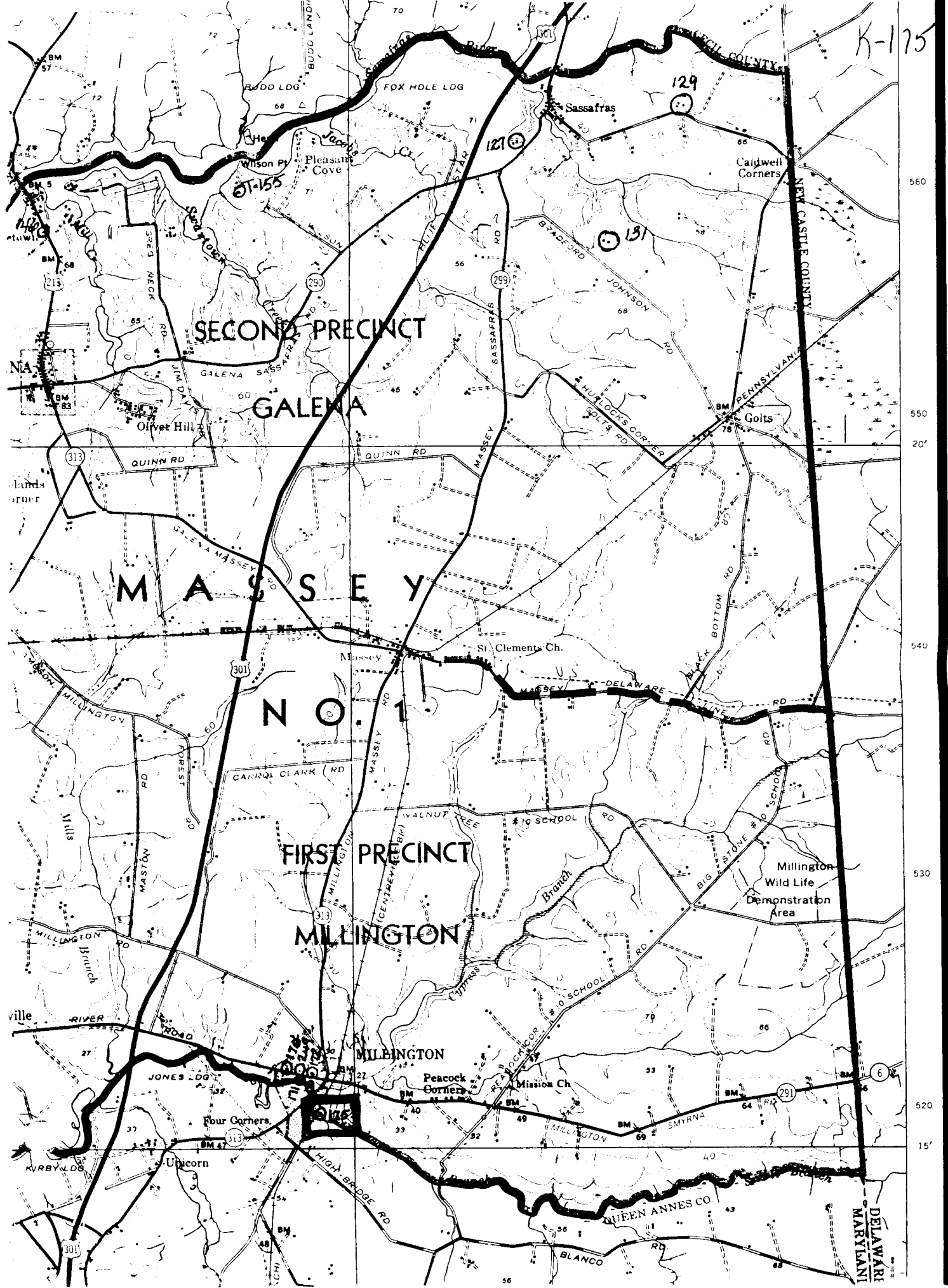
The Malingography of Kent Co.
(1st draft 9/67)

1. STATE Maryland COUNTY Kent TOWN Millington VICINITY STREET NO. Rt. 313, (south)		HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY INVENTORY K-175	
ORIGINAL OWNER Massey ORIGINAL USE mill (grist) PRESENT OWNER PRESENT USE vacant WALL CONSTRUCTION brick NO. OF STORIES two		2. NAME (Massey Mill) DATE OR PERIOD 18th century STYLE colonial ARCHITECT BUILDER	
4. NOTABLE FEATURES, HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE AND DESCRIPTION		3. FOR LIBRARY OF CONGRESS USE	
<p>The only existing 18th century mill structure in Kent County is located in Millington and is supposed to date back to the 1760's and was supposed first operated by a member of the Massey family, for which family the next town north was named. It stands on the banks of the Chester River which is little more than a tidal stream at this point, nearly thirty seven miles from the bay. In the days when the mill was constructed the town was called "Head of Chester."</p> <p>The fenestration of the mill is irregular throughout. A batten Dutch door is located about center on the west side of with a window above, on the second story. The structure is covered by a high "A" roof. On the south gable, the basement is a full story in height which makes the building appear quite tall. Throughout common bond is used with vertical header arches above the windows and doors. On the north gable is a hipped roof frame section with a central batten Dutch door flanked by a window on each side. The over-shot water wheel is located on the east side of the building and was fed by a branch of the River which was dammed up about a mile northeast of the mill. One of the recent owners has made a lake next to the mill and planted shrubbery which makes an attractive setting.</p> <p>Since the milling operation moved to the railroad in the 1950's, the mill</p>			
5. PHYSICAL CONDITION OF STRUCTURE Endangered no Interior Exterior good			
has been vacant but always maintained.			
6. LOCATION MAP (Plan Optional)		7. PHOTOGRAPH	
8. PUBLISHED SOURCES (Author, Title, Pages) INTERVIEWS, RECORDS, PHOTOS, ETC.		9. NAME, ADDRESS AND TITLE OF RECORDER Michael Bourne	
		DATE OF RECORD Sept. 16, 1968	

(Dist. N^o. 1)



K-175





OLD GRIST MILL

MHT-K 175

RT. 313 AND CHESTER RIVER
MILLINGTON, MD.

~~EAST SIDE~~

NORTH SIDE

C. ENGSTROM AUG 1977



OLD GRIST MILL

MHT-K 175

RT 313 AND CHESTER RIVER
MILLINGTON, MD.

MILL INTERIOR

C. ENGSTROM AUG 1977



OLD GRIST MILL

MHT- K 175

RT 313 AND CHESTER RIVER
MILLINGTON, MD

WEST SIDE

C. ENGSTROM AUG. 1977